

ing remarks.

At the outset, it should be recognized that the present invention provides a detachable connection for two elements, such as rods or probes pertaining, for example, to furniture or other equipment for which a strong, but temporary attachment is sought. The present invention, as now claimed, provides a detachable connection of two elements, which includes a bolt arranged between the two elements which are to be detachably connected and a tensioning body having an azimuthally extending slot through which the bolt is penetratable for fixing the bolt at one end to one element of the two elements. The tensioning body is able to rotate relative to the element to which it is attached about an axis extending substantially perpendicular to the bolt with the tensioning body being fixed in any rotational position relative to the bolt. Means for fastening the bolt to the tensioning body are rotatable about an axis that is distanced from the axis of the tensioning body and substantially parallel thereto, with such means for fastening including a retaining head detachably attached to the bolt and being rotatable relative to the tensioning body.

A stable connection, with a large contact area between the bolt end, or retaining head, and the tensioning body, can be achieved via an extra-axial cavity accommodated in the tensioning body, in which cavity the retaining head, or bolt

end, is to be accommodated, such that it is fixed in the longitudinal direction of the bolt and can, therefore, transmit both tension and pressure forces to the bolt.

In order that the tensioning body is not adversely wedged by forces acting via the bolt, the bolt on the tensioning body should be attached, to the extent possible, centrally on the tensioning body with respect to its longitudinal direction. For this reason, the tensioning body has, for a precise alignment, an azimuthally extending slot, which the bolt penetrates. A tensioning body with this feature may be of, or provide, greater axial extension, which makes an unfavorable wedging even more difficult.

As will be explained in greater detail hereinafter, nowhere in the prior art is such a novel and efficient assembly for a detachable connection of two elements either disclosed or suggested.

By the present amendments, Applicant has cancelled prior Claims 17-35 and has substituted therefor new Claims 36-53, of which Claim 36 is now the single independent claim pending in the instant patent application. Claim 36 recites the combined subject matter of prior Claims 17 and 28 (i.e., presents the subject matter of prior dependent Claim 28 in independent form) and includes the limitation that the tensioning body of the invention has "an azimuthally extending slot through which said bolt is penetratable for fixing said bolt

at one end to one element of the two elements." As discussed above, this feature allows for a more precise and easier alignment of the bolt with the retaining head and tensioning body.

By the present Response, Applicant has also proposed an (red-inked) amendment to FIG. 2 of the drawing figures, in which one element (A) is shown, in phantom, detachably and perpendicular connected to the retaining head held within the tensioning body of the present invention. A second element would be held at the opposite end of the bolt (3) in a like manner and for this reason is not separately shown.

In the first Office Action, the Examiner had issued an objection to the drawing figures of record, pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §1.83(a), on the ground that the "two elements" recited in the claims were not illustrated. The proposed drawing amendment, wherein both elements are to be attached to either end in the same manner, is intended to meet and overcome the Examiner's drawing objection.

If the proposed drawing amendment is approved by the Examiner, the amendment would be incorporated into Applicant's formal drawings (prepared by a draftsman, rather than the Applicant's patent attorney!)

Applicant has also amended the Specification at Page 12 by adding a short description pertaining to the proposed drawing amendment.

In light of the proposed drawing amendment for FIG. 2, Applicant respectfully contends that the Examiner's 37 C.F.R. §1.83(a) drawing objection of the first Office Action has been overcome and should be appropriately withdrawn.

Applicant has also amended his Specification by rewriting the paragraph bridging Pages 6 - 7 of the textual disclosure for grammatical purposes only. (A "marked-up" version of the amendments to the Specification is enclosed.)

Finally, Applicant thanks the Examiner for his consideration of the references cited by the European Patent Office and listed in the International Search Report for Applicant's corresponding P.C.T. international patent application, of which the present application represents the U.S. National Phase thereof. As suggested by the Examiner, in order that those references are listed on the cover page of the eventual patent, Applicant encloses Form PTO-1449 listing such citations.

Turning now, in detail, to an analysis of the Examiner's prior art rejection, in the first Office Action the Examiner rejected the subject matter of prior Claims 17-23, 26 and 28-35 as being anticipated, pursuant to 35 U.S.C. §102(b), by Henriott et al. It is the Examiner's contention that Henriott et al. discloses a detachable connection of two elements comprising a bolt arranged between the two elements for a detachable connection, a tensioning body for fixing the

bolt at one end of the two elements, with the tensioning body being rotatable relative to one of the elements. The Examiner has further contended that Henriott et al. discloses means for fastening and a retaining head detachably attached to the bolt and being rotatable relative to the tensioning body.

With respect to the subject matter of prior Claim 28, which has now been incorporated by Applicant into new independent Claim 36, the Examiner has contended that Henriott et al. discloses a bolt (38) penetrating an azimuthally extending slot of a tensioning body (54).

In reply to the Examiner's anticipation rejection applying Henriott et al., an analysis of this citation finds that reference numeral "54" designates a camming device (which the Examiner has analogized to Applicant's tensioning body) with a slot (64) and a mouth (65). The mouth (65) would appear to be for purposes of alignment, in that it "facilitates the orientation of the camming device 54, mouth 65 is not, however, essential to the operation of camming device 54." (Henriott et al., Col. 4, lines 43-46) Mouth 65 in the applied reference, therefore, does not appear to accept the bolt used for the connection.

Slot 64 of camming device 54 in Henriott et al., likewise, would not seem to be useful for having the bolt penetrate it. Slot 64, as best that can be determined by the

disclosure in Henriott et al., would also seem to pertain to alignment of the camming device 54. Specifically, Henriott et al. teaches that the grooved end of the dowels 38 (which the Examiner has analogized to the bolt in Applicant's claimed assembly) are first inserted into bore holes 52, which are not part of camming device 65 (see, Henriott et al., FIG. 6), and that "a screwdriver or similar tool is inserted into slot 64 on the front surface 56" of camming device 54. (Henriott et al., Col. 4, lines 34-37) The screwdriver is used in slot 64 for the purpose of moving the camming device 54 into proper position, as illustrated in FIG. 3 of the reference.

Applicant would therefore respectfully submit that the camming device (54) in Henriott et al. does not include "an azimuthally extending slot through which said bolt is penetratable" for fixing the bolt to one of the elements to be detachably connected, as is now recited in newly-entered independent Claim 36 of Applicant's patent application. The tensioning body (1) of the claimed invention, it is respectfully contended, cannot properly be analogized to the camming device of Henriott et al., which does not include this feature; the slot (64) in the camming device (54) in Henriott et al. would appear incapable, in construction, of accepting and retaining a connecting bolt, or dowels (38) as Henriott et al. so teaches.

As explained in Applicant's Specification, at Pages 6-7,

in order that the tensioning body (1) is not adversely wedged by forces acting via the bolt, the bolt (3) on the tensioning body should be attached, to the extent possible, centrally on the tensioning body with respect to its longitudinal direction. Consequently, the tensioning body has, for a precise alignment, an azimuthally extending slot, which the bolt penetrates, and which is able to provide the tensioning body with a greater axial extension, thereby rendering unwanted wedging that much more difficult.

Because such a feature is neither disclosed nor suggested by the applied prior art of Henriott et al., Applicant respectfully submits that the Examiner's 35 U.S.C. §102(b) anticipation rejection of the first Office Action has now been overcome and withdrawal of the rejection is requested.

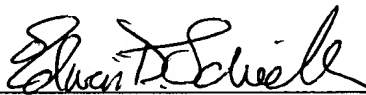
Concerning, finally, the remaining reference made of record by the Examiner, but not applied in any rejection of Applicant's claims, such additional art reference has been carefully considered, but are not believed to adversely affect the patentability of the present invention, as now claimed.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully contended that all claims now pending in the above-identified patent application (i.e., Claims 36-53) recite a novel and efficient assembly for a detachable connection of two elements having a tensioning body for securing a connecting bolt therethrough

which includes an azimuthally extending slot, which is able to provide the tensioning body with greater axial extension and a more precise alignment, without unfavorable wedging, which is patentably distinguishable over the prior art. Accordingly, withdrawal of the outstanding objection and rejection and the allowance of all claims now pending are respectfully requested and earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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- Enc.: 1. Petition for Three-Month Extension of time;
2. Check for \$460.00 (Extension Fee);
3. Proposed (red-inked) Drawing Amendment for FIG. 2;
4. Form PTO-1449 of ISA/EP cited references; and,
5. "Marked-Up" Version of Amendments to Specification.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge the Deposit Account of Applicant's Attorney, Account No. 19-0450, for any additional fees which may be due in connection with the prosecution of the present application, but which have not otherwise been provided for.



VERSION OF AMENDMENTS WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE
(Dated December 26, 2002)

IN THE SPECIFICATION

Please amend the Specification as follows:

Page 6, line 26 - Page 7, line 7, please rewrite this paragraph to now read as follows:

--In order that the tensioning body is not wedged by [means] forces acting via the bolt, the bolt on the tensioning body should be attached, [as far as] to the extent possible, centrally on the tensioning body with respect to its longitudinal direction. For this reason, the tensioning body has, for an automatic (i.e., precise or accurate) alignment, an azimuthally extending slot which the bolt penetrates. A tensioning body with this feature may be of, or provide, greater axial extension, which makes an unfavorable wedging even more difficult.--

Page 12, between lines 9-10, insert the following new paragraph:

--Figure 2 further illustrates how an element (A), shown in phantom, can be perpendicularly secured within the retaining head (2). A second element can be secured to the distal end of the bolt (3) via a second tensioning body and retaining head with the same type of connection by which the element (A) is shown, in phantom, as being attached; securement of a second element being effectively a mirror-

MARKED-UP AMENDMENTS-1

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image of the manner in which the element shown, in phantom,
has been secured.--

MARKED-UP AMENDMENTS-2